

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated October 6, 2009. Claims 13 and 16 to 23 are pending in the application, of which Claims 13, 22 and 23 are in independent form. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 13 to 15, 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,796,429 (Suzuki) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,463,432 (Murakawa) and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0110878 (Dalton). Claims 16 to 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Suzuki in view of Murakawa and Dalton and further in view of the Official Notice. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The claims herein generally concern controlling an imaging apparatus that records captured images. The imaging apparatus is connected to an image storage component in a removable condition. The image storage component stores a plurality of image data. Retrieve condition data, such as a key image or a keyword, is read from a retrieve condition storage component of the imaging apparatus, for use as a retrieve condition when performing image retrieval. A retrieval result is retrieved by searching for image data that matches or is similar to the retrieve condition data from among the plurality of image data stored in the image storage component. The retrieval result is stored in an internal storage component of the imaging apparatus. A determination is made as to whether image data stored in another image storage component connected to the imaging apparatus, instead of the image storage component, has been retrieved. In a case where it is determined that image data stored in the another image storage component has not been

retrieved, a retrieval result is retrieved from among a plurality of image data stored in the another image storage component using the common retrieve condition data which has been used with respect to the image storage component. In a case where it is determined that image data stored in the another image storage component has been retrieved, the retrieval of a retrieval result is not again performed on the another image storage component. Retrieved retrieval results are accumulatively stored in the internal storage component until there is an explicit delete instruction.

By virtue of the retrieve condition storage component of the imaging apparatus, the retrieval result is retrieved from among image data stored in another image storage component using the common retrieve condition data. Thus, a user can more easily perform an image retrieval on a plurality of image storage mediums using the same retrieval condition.

By virtue of performing retrieval based on a determining as to whether image data stored in the another image storage component has been retrieved, multiple retrievals on the same storage medium using the same condition can be prohibited.

Applicant submits that the applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest the foregoing arrangement, particularly the notion of, in a case where it is determined that image data stored in an another image storage component connected to the imaging apparatus, instead of the image storage component, has not been retrieved, retrieving a retrieval result from among a plurality of image data stored the another image storage component using the common retrieve condition data which has been used with respect to the image storage component, and in a case where it is determined that image data stored in the another image storage component

has been retrieved, the retrieval of a retrieval result is not again performed on the another image storage component.

Dalton is seen to disclose a digital camera that enables a user to designate a captured image as a favorite image. The user may designate an image as a favorite image by selecting an option displayed on the digital camera's display screen. Images that are designated as favorite images are stored in the digital camera's internal memory. Dalton also discloses that images that are stored in a memory card and then designated as favorite images by a user are transferred from the memory card to the internal memory.

On the other hand, the claims herein define an imaging apparatus that stores a common retrieve condition used to search for and retrieve image data stored in different image storage components that are successively connected to the imaging apparatus in a removable condition. In particular, the retrieve condition is stored in a retrieve condition storage component of the imaging apparatus. The stored retrieve condition data is used to search for and retrieve image data stored in an image data storage component connected to the imaging apparatus. In a case where another image storage component is connected to the imaging apparatus instead of the image storage component, the same stored retrieve condition data is used to search for and retrieve image data stored in the newly connected image storage component.

In contrast, Dalton is seen to disclose that images that are stored in a memory card and then designated as favorite images by a user are transferred from the memory card to an internal memory. Dalton is believed to be silent on an imaging apparatus that stores a common retrieve condition used to retrieve image data stored in

different image storage components that are successively connected to the imaging apparatus in a removable condition.

At page 4, the Office Action alleges that Dalton's disclosure of user designation of images stored in a removable memory card as favorite images teaches the claimed "common retrieve condition". Applicant respectfully disagrees.

User designation of images in a removable memory card is different from storing, in an imaging apparatus, a common retrieve condition used to perform successive searches for image data in different image storage components that are removably connected to the imaging apparatus. In other words, whereas Dalton is believed to involve a new user designation of images for each transfer of images from a removable memory card to the internal memory, the claims herein define the use of the same stored retrieval condition to retrieve image data from successively connected image storage components.

Therefore, Dalton is not believed to disclose or to suggest an imaging apparatus that stores a common retrieve condition used to search for and retrieve image data stored in different image storage components that are successively connected to the imaging apparatus in a removable condition.

The claims also define a retrieval component that does not repeatedly retrieve image data stored in the same image storage component. In particular, a determination is made as to whether image data stored in another image storage component connected to the imaging apparatus, instead of the image storage component, has been retrieved. In a case where it is determined that image data stored in an another image storage component connected to the imaging apparatus, instead of the image storage component, has not been retrieved, a retrieval result is retrieved from among a plurality of

image data stored the another image storage component using the common retrieve condition data which has been used with respect to the image storage component. In a case where it is determined that image data stored in the another image storage component has been retrieved, the retrieval of a retrieval result is not again performed on the another image storage component.

However, Dalton is believed to be silent on a retrieval component that does not repeatedly retrieve image data stored in the same image storage component.

Suzuki and Murakawa have been studied, but they are not seen to teach anything that, when combined with Dalton, would overcome the deficiencies of Dalton as described above.

Therefore, the applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest the foregoing arrangement, particularly the notion of, in a case where it is determined that image data stored in an another image storage component connected to the imaging apparatus, instead of the image storage component, has not been retrieved, retrieving a retrieval result from among a plurality of image data stored the another image storage component using the common retrieve condition data which has been used with respect to the image storage component, and in a case where it is determined that image data stored in the another image storage component has been retrieved, the retrieval of a retrieval result is not again performed on the another image storage component.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, independent Claims 13, 22 and 23, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to recite subject matter

that would not have been obvious from the applied art, and are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

CONCLUSION

No claim fees are believed due. However, should it be determined that additional claim fees are required under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 or 1.17, the Director is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Shant Tchakerian #61,825/
Shant H. Tchakerian
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No.: 62,825

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10104-3800
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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